Specific cases as and when reported are appropriately dealt with by law enforcing agencies. Furthermore, several schemes aiming at comprehensive and holistic empowerment of women are already being implemented by various Ministries/Departments. The Department of Women and Child Development in the Ministry of Human Resource Development is implementing an integrated scheme for women empowerment called "Swayamsidha". This scheme aims at convergence of schemes being implemented by various Ministries/Departments of Government of India for empowerment of women.

Pilot project for welfare of disabled in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka

2033. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have proposed a pilot project in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka for the welfare of the disabled in collaboration with the Rehabilitation Council of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the budget allocation made; and

(c) the other steps taken to enable the Society to treat the disabled at par with others?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 (PWD Act) seeks to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and their full participation in nation-building. It provides for both preventive and promotional aspect of rehabilitation like education, employment and vocational training, job reservation, rehabilitation and manpower development, creation of barrier-free environment, rehabilitation for persons with disability, unemployment allowance, establishment of homes for persons with severe disability, etc. The Act also provides for grievance redressal mechanism in relation

to deprivation of rights of persons with disabilities and non-implementation of related laws, rules, regulations, executive orders, guidelines, etc. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is running manpower development programmes to improve availabilityof rehabilitation professionals, providing wide range of rehabilitation services through the 6 National and Apex Institutes in the different areas of disability, 5 Composite Regional Centres, 4 Regional Rehabilitation Centres, 11 District Rehabilitation Centres and 70 District Disability Rehabilitation Centres. The Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) is manufacturing and providing various types of aids and appliances for persons with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) is responsible for regulating training policies and programmes for various categories of professionals in the area of disability and maintains a Central Rehabilitation Register for them. The National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilites has came into being in December, 1999. Implementation of the PWD Act, 1995 is reviewed through the mechanism of statutory committees *i.e.* Central Coordination Committee (CCC) and Central Executive Committee (CEC). Delivery of various rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities is facilitated by voluntary organizations by affording financial assistance and technical and administrative support. To promote economic empowerment, the National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) extends soft loans for self-employment ventures.

Achievements of 'Abhaya'

2034. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether an institution 'Abhaya' a centre for the destitute women, mentally ill, discarded children and drug addicts is working in the State of Kerala;

(b) if so, the achievements made by this social welfare centre;

(c) the authority which is funding the centre;

(d) whether a wide publicity of the good work done by the centre is made to enable social organizations in other areas to set-up similar centres for the unwanted persons, discarded children and destitute women; and